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ABSTRACT

This study examined Alabama State Education Report Card indicators for the year 2000 to identify predictors of student academic achievement at both the district and school levels for 128 public city and county school systems and 1,272 Alabama public schools. School district performance grade and school performance grade as provided on the Alabama Education Report Card for 2000 were used as the dependent variables for district and school academic achievement. Separate analyses were conducted for 61 city and 67 county school systems and for all 128 districts combined. Variables were the number of students (district and school enrollment), percent of students on free and reduced price meals, percent average daily attendance, per pupil expenditure, dropout percentages from the 1999 report card, school system revenue sources, and percent of system and school employees with bachelor's, master's, or 6-year doctoral administrative licensure. The results of t-tests indicated significant differences between city and county schools on variables in the analysis. Several models were regressed on student achievement measured by system academic performance grade, resulting in "R"s ranging from 0.76 to 0.81 and adjusted "R" squared from 0.57 to 0.64. System size, percent funding from local revenue, and percent of administrators holding 6-year doctoral administrative licensure were significant predictors of a higher school district performance grade after controlling for poverty. At the school level, variables in the regression models yielded "R"s between 0.62 and 0.67, with adjusted "R" squared between 0.39 and 0.45. At the school level, the most significant predictors of higher performance grade after controlling for poverty were percent average daily attendance, school size, and percent of teachers with master's degrees. Appended are selected performance indicators from the Alabama Report (2nd Glossary-FY 1999-2000, State Department of Education. (Contains 3 figures, 11 tables, and 29 references.) (Author/SLD)

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Research Brief R-01-1022-01

Marie Miller-Whitehead

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Educational Equity in Alabama: What We Learned from Report Card 2000

Abstract

The study examined Alabama State Education Report Card indicators for the year 2000 to identify predictors for student academic achievement at both the district and school level for 128 public city and county school systems and 1272 Alabama public schools. School district performance grade and school performance grade as provided on the Alabama Education Report Card for 2000 were used as the dependent variables for district and school academic achievement.

Separate analyses were conducted for 61 city and 67 county school systems and for all 128 districts combined. Variables were number of students (district and school enrollment), percent of students on free and reduced price meals, percent average daily attendance, per pupil expenditure, dropout percentages from the 1999 report card, school system revenue sources, and percent of system and school employees with bachelor's, master's, or 6 year doctoral administrative licensure. The results of t-tests indicated significant differences between city and county school systems on variables in the analysis. Several models were regressed on student achievement measured by system academic performance grade, resulting in $\underline{R}$s ranging from .76 to .81 and adjusted $\underline{R^2}$s from .57 to .64. System size, percent funding from local revenue, and percent of administrators holding 6 year doctoral administrative licensure were significant predictors of a higher school district performance grade after controlling for poverty.

At the school level, variables in the regression models yielded $\underline{R}$s between .62 and .67, with adjusted $\underline{R^2}$ between .39 and .45. At the school level the most significant predictors of higher performance grade after controlling for poverty were percent average daily attendance, school size, and percent of teachers with masters' degrees.

Educational Equity in Alabama: What We Learned from Report Card 2000

School and school district indicators on the Education Report Card published by the Alabama State Department of Education have changed somewhat over the past several years, although the broader reporting areas have remained relatively stable. In 2000, each school system was required to fund the EFT at the rate of 10 mills of assessed property value and systems were guaranteed to be funded at no less than 1995 levels.

Appendix A provides selected performance indicators from the 1999 and 2000 reporting areas for the state, school district, and school level report card. All 128 Alabama school districts are unified districts (i.e., serving the full range of K-12) although within each district schools may be configured as K-3, K-5, 5-7, 6-8, K-9, K-12, or other combinations of grade levels. Thus, school district report cards contain indicators common across all districts within the state but individual school report cards report information specific to the student populations and grade levels taught at the school. While additional information on schools and school districts is available from various sources including ALSDE, the State Education Report Cards provide the most readily accessible official data on schools available to most educators as well as to the general public. Under current Alabama legislation schools are accountable for student learning, fiscal soundness, and school safety and discipline. All 61 Alabama city school superintendents are appointed as well as 27 of the 67 county superintendents. Forty county school superintendents are elected. Although school boards may be elected or appointed the overwhelming majority of Alabama school boards were appointed in 2000.

In the year 2000, 18 of 128 Alabama school superintendents were female (14 %) and 49 school superintendents held doctoral degrees (38 %). At the school level, 33 of 190 high school principals were female (17 %), 93 of 254 middle school principals were female (37 %), 389 of 642 elementary school principals were female (61 %), and 24 of 186 K-12 school principals were female (13 %) with women holding approximately 42 % of all school principal positions. According to 1993-1994 survey data from the National Center for Education Statistics, nationally 28 % of school principals and 65 % of school teachers were female. For school building leaders at the doctoral level in 2000, there were 21 high school principals (11 %), 13 middle school principals (5 %), 53 elementary school principals (8 %), and 4 K-12 principals (2 %) for a total of approximately 7 % of all Alabama school principals holding the doctoral degree.

Insert Figures 1 and 2 about here

Reported categories on the 1999-2000 district report cards included (a) classroom information (number of portables, number of teachers, administrators, counselors, name of superintendent and school board members, education level of faculty by percent at bachelor's, master's, or doctoral), (b) percent of high school career and technical programs with industrial certification, (c) safety and discipline (number of incidents reported), (d) fiscal data (sources of revenue from federal, state, and local), expenditure categories (instruction, administration, operations, capital outlay, food, etc), per pupil expenditure, mills equivalent, (e) an academic

performance summary grade (status and number of schools clear, alert, or on caution), and student data including (f) number of students in system, (g) percent students eligible for free and reduced meals, (h) standardized test scores for grades 3 through 11, (i) achievement to ability comparison, (j) writing achievement, (k) ACT average scores, (l) high school dropout rate and projected dropout rate, and (m) high school graduation exam reading and language arts pass rates. In addition, several of these reported areas also provided regional and state comparison data. Appendix A, an abbreviated summary of the Alabama State Department of Education Report Card Glossary, provides additional information on computation and grade scales of various reporting categories. The 2000 Alabama Education Report Card spreadsheet data did not provide information on district demographics (per capita income, ethnicity, migration), teacher salary, or student ethnicity at the district or school level. The 1999 Alabama Department of Education Annual Report did provide district level student demographic data as well as student demographics aggregated to the statewide level.

According to the 1999 Annual Report, Alabama schools received 56.2 % of revenues from state sources, 26.57 % from local sources, 8.11 % from federal sources, and 9.13 % from other sources. In 1999 instruction represented 51.8 % of statewide education expenditures, instructional support services 11.8 %, capital outlay 8.5 %, operations and maintenance 7 %, food service 6 %, and administration 3.7 % of statewide education expenditures. Per pupil expenditure by system in 2000 ranged from a low of $4,417 to a high of $7,119, with a mean expenditure per pupil of $5326 and a median of $5180. Appendix A section 4.3 provides national and regional comparisons for per pupil expenditure.

Figures from 2001 Quick Facts indicated that for 1999-2000, 65.5 % of education funds came from state revenue, with 25.4 % from local sources, 9.1 % from federal revenue sources. Alabama ranked 10th among the states for federal funding, 7th for state funding, and 46th for local level funding.

Approximately 65 % of Alabama's over 36,452 1999 high school graduates were White, and approximately 53 % were female, with a total enrollment in grade 12 of 43,950 students in 1999. Alabama schools enrolled approximately 736,000 students in grades K-12 in 1999, of whom 61 % were identified as White. In 2000 approximately 331,300 or 45 % of Alabama's K-12 public school students were entitled to free and reduced price meals.

Because schools that served multiple grades were counted in more than one category, the breakdown number of 1445 schools by category reported by the state (elementary, middle, and high) exceeded the actual number of public schools in Alabama (1272) in the year 2000. Forty-three schools serving 18,789 children in 29 school systems were listed as K-2, kindergarten, early childhood centers, or primary schools in 2000 and there were 59 area vocational centers.

Review of Related Literature

There have been many studies of state education report cards conducted over the years from a variety of different perspectives, often connected to court cases involving funding equity between poor and wealthy school districts or legislation designed to provide students with

compensatory education and adequate opportunities to learn (Crampton, 2001; Ferguson & Ladd, 1996; Minorini, 1994; Peevely, 1999; Verstegen, 1996; Vinik, 1996). The examination of these school indicators and profiles is not static, but is necessarily a continuous cycle as state, county, city, and school demographics, state and federal programs, funding formulas, student testing programs, graduation requirements, teacher and administrator credentialling, and constraints of the state and county tax base may change from year to year (Ladd, 1998; Lockwood & McLean, 1997; Miller-Whitehead, 2001; "School finance: State efforts..., 1997; Verstegen, 2001; Wainer, 1993). Variables such as per pupil expenditure, class size, attendance, teacher salary, and other demographics reported on state report cards may be aggregated to the extent that their interpretations yield at best vague generalizations. As one study put it, "aggregation and the use of a single per pupil expenditure measure may obscure differential spending between grade levels or at different schools" (Fortune & Spofford-Richardson, 2000, p. 23). Some researchers imply that the process of determining just what goes into a particular state report card category may resemble attempts to replicate Colonel Sanders' famous recipe of eleven herbs and spices or the closely guarded secret formula for Cola. This is probably more true when making comparisons of indicators between states than for district to district comparisons within states. Compensatory education pupil weighting formulas are often mandated by the state or federal programs that support them, although some states provide funding additional to that provided by the federal government for certain programs and some do not, for example in the area of bilingual education (Hussar & Sonnenberg, 2000; Riddle, 1992).

In an Alabama school funding case, a representative of the ETS (Educational Testing Service) pointed out that funding an extra $790 per pupil would pay 165 additional teachers or purchase 2,000 classroom computers, the implication being that these additional resources would have a direct positive effect on student achievement. The negative effect of poverty on student achievement has been well documented and has resulted in such compensatory programs as Title I, designed to aid students at the poverty level. The Alabama funding suit was the result of demonstrated disparites in adequacy of education from district to district, with Alabama ranked 22nd nationally in population but 43rd in disposable per capita income and 5th nationally in % of population at the poverty level (Vinik, 1996). Although a 1993 Alabama Supreme Court decision found the state's education funding mechanism to be unconstitutional, for a variety of reasons remedies have yet to be enacted (Carr & Fuhrman, 1999). When outcomes can be ranked in terms of monetary units, cost benefit analysis (CBA) is often of interest to decision-makers who wish to determine how much it will cost to raise student achievement by a certain percentage for a given population of students, although many educational and health care programs use non-monetary measures such as number of lives saved or quality of life and are thus evaluated by CEA or cost effectiveness analysis (Grissmer, Flanagan, Kawata, & Williamson, 2000; Nas, 1996). Although there were great disparities in per pupil expenditure, commonly used fiscal equity indices that are based on ratios between enrollment and per pupil expenditure did not indicate unexpected levels of disparity, with a low value of .85 for the McLoone index and .345 for the federal range ratio. The McLoone index is based on per pupil expenditures below the state median with lower values meaning greater disparity and a value of 1 indicating equity. The federal range ratio is computed

from the value of per pupil expenditure at the 5th and 95th percentiles, with a value of zero indicating equity and higher values indicating more disparity (Hussar & Sonnenberg, 2000).

Lockwood and McLean (1993) examined Alabama student achievement on the SAT9 using average daily attendance (ADA) to compute per pupil expenditure as a predictor variable of student achievement, pointing out that teacher salary was a less precise measure than per pupil expenditure due to differential compensation for teachers of certain subjects or student populations, with some researchers having found little correlation between teacher salary and student achievement (Hanushek, 1996). Depending upon the percent of teaching positions receiving differential compensation within a district, teacher salary might or might not be considered a proxy for teacher training and experience. Thus a finding that there is a relationship between teacher salary and student achievement could either be a correlate of higher pay for differential compensation or of teacher training and experience unless these variables are controlled for in the analysis. Conducting a series of regression analyses with predictor variable per pupil expenditure per ADA, Lockwood and McLean (1993) found that a curvilinear relationship between instructional expenditure and student achievement accounted for between 7% and 9 % of explained variance in student achievement on the SAT9 subject area tests for grades 4 and 8. Followup studies of Hanushek's longitudinal research have resulted in findings that school inputs and funding do have significant effects on student achievement (Hedges, Laine, & Greenwald, 1994). In a RAND study of cost effective correlates of student achievement, Grissmer et al. (2000) estimated that increasing student achievement by .10 standard deviation could cost from $200 to as much as $3,000 per child. According to the RAND report, Alabama's student achievement across 7 tests administered as part of the NAEP surpassed that of students in only 3 other states: Mississippi, Louisiana, and California. The choice of statistical model may also influence results of analysis of state report card data, particularly in nested models controlling for SES. While not within the scope of this study, it would be of interest to examine the effects of school and district simultaneously as two levels of a multilevel model (Galvin, Robins, & Callahan, 1998).

Ferguson and Ladd (1996) point out that student achievement has been shown to translate into higher earnings for graduates, that test score data provides an immediate measure of student achievement, and that thus it can be considered a valid indicator of educational outcome. They developed a value-added model based on test scores and education level of community, family income, mobility, district enrollment, percent of students in public schools, urbanicity of district, and identification of district as a city or county district to examine student achievement at the fourth grade level in 690 Alabama public schools. Their model accounted for between 59% and 80 % of variability in student academic achievement at the school level. They found that student achievement was generally higher in communities where higher percentages of adults were college educated and in schools with higher percentages of teachers with the master's degree. Their findings also indicated that for districts with instructional expenditures below the median, a 10 % increase in spending would be expected to yield an increase in student achievement of .356 standard deviations.

School size and school system size have also been identified as correlates of student achievement (Bickel & Howley, 2000; Gilbert, 2000; Lamdin, 1995). However, it is expensive to

build schools and even more expensive to fund city school districts within a county, but as city systems are created by referendum their existence is prima facie evidence of taxpayer support for funding them. Alabama has 67 counties and 128 school districts (all unified), with some counties having only a single county school district while other counties have both a county school district and as many as 10 city school districts. In 2000, the average Alabama school district had approximately 5,700 students with the largest district having nearly 66,000 students. Arkansas, on the other hand, where school district size was found not to be correlated to student achievement, had 311 districts with an average of 1,400 pupils each, the largest district having approximately 25,000 students (Gilbert).

Student achievement may also be affected by school and community initiatives that are exogenous to the district's formal budgetary or state reporting mechanism such as fundraisers, partnerships with business, volunteer programs, parent organizations, and community partnerships. City districts may be more successful than county districts in fundraising efforts (Golanda & Dagley, 1994). If this is the case then report card indicators may not be reflective of the entire spectrum of teaching and learning that takes place in the school (Bobbett & French, 1993; Bobbett, French, & Achilles, 1993; Fortune & Spofford-Richardson; McLean, Snyder, & Lawrence, 1998).

Insert Figure 3 about here

Data

School Districts

Table 1 provides descriptive statistics for the county district level variables used in the analysis and Table 2 for city district variables for comparison purposes.

Insert Tables 1 and 2 about here

As expected, aggregate student achievement on the SAT9 and the school district performance variables were highly correlated as they essentially measure student academic performance. Tables 1 and 2 show that the range of per pupil expenditure for city systems was greater than for county systems, with a maximum per pupil expenditure in county systems of $5181 and in city systems of $7119. The percent of school system funding derived from local revenue was also higher for city systems, with one city system reporting over 59% of funding from local revenue compared to a high of not quite 39% for county systems. Mean SAT average for city school systems was only 9 points higher than for county systems, although the highest SAT average for a city system was 22 points higher than that of the highest county system. There were significant positive correlations between percent of funding from local revenue, percent of

faculty with advanced degrees, and student academic achievement for both city and county systems.

Insert Tables 3 and 4 about here

There were disparities between city and county systems in the correlation of per pupil expenditures with other variables as well as with percent of dropouts correlated to other variables.

Insert Table 5 about here

Table 5 provides the results of t-tests conducted to determine the extent to which differences between city and county systems were statistically significant and the 95% confidence interval of the mean for each variable. There were significant differences between city and county systems on all variables with the exception of percent of average daily attendance and percent of administrators with advanced administrative licensure.

Insert Table 6 about here

For purposes of this study, the dependent variable used as the measure of student achievement was performance grade from the district and school report card, although data for SAT average is also provided. Performance grade and SAT average are highly correlated but not to the extent of multicollinearity or singularity. Although conducting separate regression analyses for city and county systems would have been of interest, for the purposes of this study regression models included data for all 128 city and county school districts. Table 6 provides comparisons of several of the regression models that were considered. Although all tested models accounted for approximately 80% of explained variability in the school district performance grade, not all variables proved to be statistically significant in the model even if the result of the F test for the regression model indicated that the regression model was significantly different from zero. As is shown in Table 7, the optimized model (Model 3 from Table 6) included variables that met a selection criteria of $p < .05$. Table 7 displays the intercept, the unstandardized regression coefficients, and the standardized regression coefficients for the optimized model, $R = .80$, $R^2 = .64$, adj $R^2 = .63$, $F(4,123) = 53.69$, $p < .001$. Two of the variables, percent of students on free and reduced price meals and total enrollment, had a negative effect on district performance grade while percent of funding from local revenue and percent of administrators holding advanced licensure had a positive effect on school district performance grade.

The model resulted in the following formula for predicted school district performance grade:

Performance = 3.431 + .031(AA%) - .00001(Enrollment) - .024(Freemeal%) + .014(LocRev%)

Insert Table 7 about here

Schools

Since for the purposes of this study city and county schools were not examined separately the descriptive statistics for Alabama's public schools indicate a great diversity on all variables as shown in Table 8.

Insert Table 8 about here

School enrollments in Alabama public schools ranged from as few as 63 students to as many as 2724 students, with an average school enrollment of 558 students. Some schools had 100% of students qualified for free and reduced price meals and some schools had 100% average daily attendance while at other schools average attendance was a little more than 86%. Table 9 provides correlations for the school variables and shows that attendance was positively related to a school's achievement to ability comparison grade as well as to SAT average and performance grade. There was a negative correlation between school enrollment and percent advanced administrative licensure indicating that schools with more students were less likely to have administrators with advanced licensure, although all the correlations between faculty with advanced degrees and student achievement were positive at the school level. Schools with more students qualified for free and reduced price meals were also more likely to have higher percentages of faculty with BS degrees.

Insert Table 9 about here

Because of the amount of variability and diversity that exists in Alabama schools, school level regression models did not yield as high R^2 as regression models at the district level. Table 10 shows variables included in three of the models tested at the school level. Although the results of F tests indicated that the regression coefficients for Models 1 - 3 were significantly different from zero, Model 3 accounted for more variability in school performance than either Model 1 or Model 2 and each of the variables included in Model 3 was significant at $p < .001$.

Insert Table 10 about here

School level models yielded Rs between .63 and .67, with adjusted R^2s ranging from .39 to .45. The addition of ADA (average daily attendance) to the school level model resulted in both a higher R and adjusted R^2. The optimized regression model is provided in Table 11, with variable selection based on significance of $p < .05$. All variables were significant at $p = < .001$ for the optimized school model. Table 11 displays the intercept, the unstandardized regression coefficients, and the standardized regression coefficients for the optimized model, $R = .67$, $R^2 = .45$, adj $R^2 = .45$, $F(4,1256) = 255.51$, $p < .001$.

Insert Table 11 about here

The regression model for prediction of school level performance grade resulted in the following formula:

Performance = - 11.19 + .0073(MS%) + .152(ADA%) - .0003(Enrollment) - .021(Freemeal%)

Discussion

The results of examination of variables included on Alabama's Education Report Card showed that significant differences existed between city and county school districts in Alabama based on data from Report Card 2000. The analyses conducted provided a wealth of useful information but available variables were unable to explain much of the variability in Alabama's schools. Teachers' salary information was not included in the analysis although some researchers consider percent of faculty and administrators holding master's and doctoral degrees a proxy for salary. However, depending upon years of credited experience it is possible for an Alabama teacher with a bachelor's degree to have a higher salary than a teacher with a master's degree or 6 year administrative license and three years or less experience. Since data for some schools indicated that nearly all teachers had bachelor's degrees, it is unlikely that all were also beginning teachers. The probability is that many of these were teachers at the upper end of the experience scale and had been in the classroom for many years. There was a negative correlation between student achievement and percent of teachers at the bachelor's degree level. There are various differential compensations depending upon teaching assignment that affect salary such that education level may not be reflective of an educator's actual salary.

Some of Alabama's school systems had high dropout rates and for both city and county school districts there was a positive correlation between students on free and reduced meals and percent of dropouts, with poverty level students in city systems more likely to have dropped out of school than students in county systems. There was a negative correlation between school district size and percent of dropouts for both city and county districts. However, there was a disparity between city and county in both per pupil expenditure and in ability to achievement comparison grade when correlated to percent of district dropouts.

Some of the disparities between city and county school districts may have been the result of differences in allocation of funds and in participation in programs that are specific to the needs of city or county school districts. The percentage of students at the poverty level had a negative effect on achievement at both district and school level.

Results of the analysis indicated that faculty education level had a positive effect on student achievement at both the district and school level that may or may not have been related to educator salary, that students in the largest districts and schools did not generally achieve as well as those in more average size districts and schools, that percentage of funding from local revenue was positively correlated to student achievement at the district level, and that student achievement was positively correlated to school attendance at the school level. The negative correlation of student achievement to percentage of teachers at bachelor's level suggests the need for continuing

professional development or enrollment in advanced degree programs for experienced teachers at the bachelor's level, and for intensive mentoring programs for beginning level teachers with a bachelor's degree.

Alabama remains near the bottom of states in student achievement indices and despite a 1993 decision that Alabama's educational funding system was unconstitutional, few changes in the educational funding system have been enacted. Goals 2000, a federal program aimed at promoting a variety of initiatives to improve student achievement, teacher preparation, and community involvement, did not win the support of Alabama's state leadership under a recent administration and thus those funds were not available for Alabama's schools, despite their being under proration for years due to lack of funding. In conclusion, closing the student achievement gap may often depend upon the extent to which communities, funding agencies, legislators, and state leadership choose to prioritize cost benefit or cost effective outcomes and the extent to which public education is perceived as a priority.

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Figure 1. Alabama school superintendents holding the doctoral degree in the year 2000.

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Figure 2. School districts with female superintendents in the year 2000.

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Figure 3. Alabama school systems with SAT9 averages of A or A-, with Achievement to Ability Comparisons of A or A-, and with Performance G

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Table 1

Descriptives for County System Variables, (N = 67)

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	M	SD	SE
AAC	4.92	5.41	5.15	.12	.02
AA %	.80	11.00	5.29	2.19	.27
ADA %	95.50	99.57	96.68	.63	.08
DROPOUT % '99	8.30	32.95	19.04	6.03	.76
ENROLLMENT	1669.00	65547.00	7270.00	9968.00	1217.80
PER PUPIL $	4516.70	6034.95	5181.20	315.66	38.60
FED REV %	3.36	24.70	9.92	3.97	.49
FREEMEAL %	20.06	95.00	55.28	19.23	2.35
LOC REV%	11.33	38.61	20.99	5.92	.72
PERFORMANCE	2.00	4.00	2.40	.52	.06
SAT	35.00	66.00	51.24	7.13	.87
BS %	32.90	61.80	45.90	7.01	.86
MA %	32.70	61.30	48.81	6.30	.77

Note. AAC is a computation of the school system's achievement to ability comparison. AA % is % of administrators with 6th year program licensure. ADA is average daily attendance. SAT is average student achievement on the SAT9 based on state computation. BS% and MS% refer to % of teachers with bachelor's and master's degrees.

Table 2

Descriptives for City System Variables, (N = 61)

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	M	SD	SE
AAC	4.87	6.22	5.32	.22	.03
AA %	.00	16.30	5.62	3.22	.41
ADA %	94.39	98.65	96.65	.77	.10
DROPOUT % '99	1.44	31.92	14.91	7.91	1.02
ENROLLMENT	673.00	38137.00	4017.87	5523.28	707.18
PER PUPIL $	4417.36	7119.33	5484.13	593.09	75.94
FED REV %	1.00	17.46	8.16	3.20	.41
FREEMEAL %	.00	91.98	41.88	18.42	2.36
LOC REV%	14.41	59.10	28.61	9.45	1.21
PERFORMANCE	2.00	4.00	3.00	.82	.11
SAT	40.00	88.00	60.00	10.35	1.33
BS %	26.60	63.60	41.60	8.49	1.09
MA %	36.30	65.90	52.78	7.60	.97

Note. AAC is a computation of the school system's achievement to ability comparison. AA % is % of administrators with 6th year program licensure. ADA is average daily attendance. SAT is average student achievement on the SAT9 based on state grade scale. BS% and MS% refer to % of teachers with bachelor's and master's degrees.

Table 3

Pearson's Product Moment Correlations for County System Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
AAC	1.00											
AA %	.350**	1.00										
ADA %	.105	.120	1.00									
BS %	-.279*	-.461**	.071	1.00								
DROPOUT % 99	.021	.021	-.168	-.147	1.00							
ENROLLMENT	-.032	-.082	-.185	-.030	-.146	1.00						
PER PUPIL $	-.088	-.085	-.015	.181	.244	-.081	1.00					
FREEMEAL %	-.186	-.265*	.121	.462**	.105	-.319**	.459**	1.00				
LOC REV %	.247*	.206	-.228	-.323**	.110	.290*	-.073	-.661**	1.00			
MA %	.188	.165	-.121	-.951**	.160	.062	-.171	-.422**	.288*	1.00		
PERFORMANCE	.417**	.349**	-.098	-.300*	.084	.189	-.179	-.681**	.503**	.213	1.00	
SAT	.443**	.349**	-.100	-.473**	-.020	.269*	-.377**	-.901**	.647**	.404**	.813**	1.00

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 4

Pearson's Product Moment Correlations for City System Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
AAC	1.00											
AA %	.325*	1.00										
ADA %	.099	-.291*	1.00									
BS %	-.313*	-.451**	-.076	1.00								
DROPOUT % 99	-.380*	-.179	-.241	.099	1.00							
ENROLLMENT	-.002	-.069	.054	.193	-.079	1.00						
PER PUPIL $	.166	.277*	.090	-.288	-.276*	.157	1.00					
FREEMEAL %	-.533**	-.087	-.317*	.456**	.244	-.003	-.125	1.00				
LOC REV %	.396**	.041	.383**	-.310*	-.316*	.197	.543**	-.598**	1.00			
MA %	.212	.080	.208	-.926**	-.034	-.186	.204	-.472**	.329**	1.00		
PERFORMANCE	.664**	.205	.149	-.496**	-.325*	-.111	.112	-.811**	.513**	.467**	1.00	
SAT	.762**	.261*	.221	-.505**	-.363**	-.036	.238	-.898**	.621**	.453**	.901**	1.00

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

Table 5

T-Tests for Differences between City and County Systems, (N = 128)

Variable	t	Sig t	SE	95% Confidence Interval of Mean	
AAC	-5.606	.000	.031	-.2345	-.1121
AA %	-.689	.492	.483	-1.2900	.6235
ADA	.183	.855	.1243	-.2233	.2688
BS %	3.136	.002	1.372	1.5875	7.0164
DROPOUT % '99	3.266	.001	1.2643	1.6266	6.6328
ENROLLMENT	2.252	.026	1443.9886	394.9231	6110.145
PER PUPIL $	-3.652	.000	82.9490	-467.0798	-138.7725
FREE MEAL %	4.018	.000	3.3353	6.8015	20.0022
LOC REV %	-5.518	.000	1.3804	-10.3487	-4.8852
MA %	-3.225	.002	1.231	-6.4038	-1.5335
PERFORMANCE	-4.967	.000	.1202	-.8349	-.3592
SAT	-5.364	.000	1.56	-11.45	-5.28

Note. df = 126

Table 6

System Level Regression Models, (N = 128)

Models	R	R^2	Adj R^2	SE Estimate	F	Sig
Variables in the Models						
1 MA%, ADA%, Enrollment, AA%, LocRev%, Freemeal%	.799	.638	.620	.4562	35.49	.000
2 LocRev%, AA%, Systype, Freemeal%	.797	.636	.624	.4538	53.62	.000
3 LocRev%, Enrollment, AA%, Freemeal%	.797	.636	.624	.4536	53.69	.000

Note. Variables regressed on system performance grade for 2000.

Table 7

Summary of Optimized Model for Predictors of School System Performance (N = 128)

Variable	B	SE B	β
(Constant)	3.431	.284	
AA%	.031	.015	.113*
ENROLLMENT	-.00001	.000	-.126*
FREEMEAL	-.024	.003	-.657***
LOCREV%	.014	.006	.164*

Note. $R = .80$, $R^2 = .64$, adj $R^2 = .62$, $F(4,123) = .53.69$, $p < .001$.
Note. *** $p < .001$, * $p < .05$

Table 8

Descriptives for School Level Variables, (N = 1272)

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	M	SD	SE
AAC	3.5	6.54	5.24	.36	.010
AA%	.00	33.33	5.03	4.75	.133
ADA%	86.88	100.00	96.72	1.35	.038
BS%	.00	91.67	45.82	12.71	.356
ENROLLMENT	63.00	2724.00	558.33	296.38	8.310
FREEMEAL%	.00	100.00	49.80	24.67	.694
MA%	6.25	100.00	49.16	12.08	.339
PERFORMANCE	0.00	4.00	2.67	.84	.024
SAT	14.00	89.00	54.75	12.20	.340

Table 9

Pearson's Product Moment Correlations for School Level Variables

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
AAC	1.00								
AA%	.009	1.00							
ADA%	.327**	-.020	1.00						
BS%	-.121**	-.316**	-.037	1.00					
ENROLLMENT	-.150**	-.024	-.212**	-.067*	1.00				
FREEMEAL	-.107**	-.080**	.026	.271**	-.354**	1.00			
MA%	.123**	-.062*	.047	-.928**	.080**	-.253**	1.00		
PERFORMANCE	.613**	.037	.250**	-.272**	.068*	-.597**	.271**	1.00	
SAT	.661**	.065*	.262**	-.300**	.067*	-.665**	.290**	.927**	1.00

Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

30

31

Table 10

Regression Models for School Level Variables, (N = 1260)

Models		R	R^2	Adj R^2	SE Estimate	F	Sig
	Variables in the Model						
1	AA%, ENROLLMENT, MS%, FREEMEAL	.63	.39	.39	.65	202.78	.000
2	ADA%, AA%, MS%, FREEMEAL%, ENROLLMENT	.67	.45	.45	.62	204.29	.000
3	ADA%, FREEMEAL%, MS%, ENROLLMENT	.67	.45	.45	.62	255.51	.000

Table 11

Summary of Optimized Regression Model for Predictors of School Performance, (N = 1260)

Variable	B	SE B	β
(Constant)	-11.19	1.305	
FREEMEAL	-.021	.001	-.614***
MS%	.00725	.002	.105***
ENROLLMENT	-.00029	.000	-.104***
ADA%	.152	.013	.244***

Note. $R = .67$, $R^2 = .45$, adj $R^2 = .45$, $F(4,1256) = 255.51$, $p < .001$.
Note. *** $p < .001$

State Department of Education

Report Card Glossary – FY 1999-2000

APPENDIX A

Selected Performance Indicators from the Alabama Report Card Glossary

GRADING DEFINITION

A	Superior	D	Caution
A-	Excellent	D-	Extreme Caution
B+	Outstanding	F	Failing
B	Very Good	N/A	Not Applicable
B-	Good	na	Not Available
C+	High Average	S	Satisfactory
C	Average	U	Unsatisfactory
C-	Moderate Caution	*	Meets Standards for Clear
D+	Concerned Caution		

Item 1.3: Overall School Performance / Overall System Performance / Overall State Performance

Description: This field contains the overall school performance grade for 1999-2000 based to the average performance by the students on the Stanford Achievement Test 9th Edition.

Source: Stanford Achievement Scores as reported on the data tape from Harcourt Brace and Company

Calculations: Average of the Complete Battery NCE Scores for all students divided by the number of students tested over all grades in the school. The resultant average is then converted to a %ile rank.

OVERALL PERFORMANCE
(Based on SAT 9 %ile Ranking Scores)

A	70 and above	C	40 to 47
A-	66 to 69	C-	35 to 39
B+	62 to 65	D+	31 to 34
B	58 to 61	D	27 to 30
B-	54 to 57	D-	23 to 26
C+	48 to 53	F	22 and below

STANFORD ACHIEVEMENT TEST
(SAT 9 %ile Ranking Scores)

A	70 and above	C	40 to 47
A-	66 to 69	C-	35 to 39
B+	62 to 65	D+	31 to 34
B	58 to 61	D	27 to 30
B-	54 to 57	D-	23 to 26
C+	48 to 53	F	22 and below

State Department of Education

Report Card Glossary – FY 1999-2000

Item 2.2: ***Stanford Achievement Test Average Battery Over All Students Tested***

Description: This section contains the average total battery %ile rank score across grades on the Stanford Achievement Test (SAT) for the school or system. It represents a weighted mean of the grade level scores. **The NCE (Normal Curve Equivalent Score) rather than the %ile rank** must be used in this calculation. The calculated mean is then converted back to a %ile rank. The national average %ile rank is 50%.

Source: Calculation using data tape from Harcourt Brace and Company

Years: 1995-1996 through 1999-2000

Calculations: Step 1 - Sum the product of the number tested and the average NCE by grade
Step 2 - Compute the average score by dividing by the total number tested
Step 3 - Convert the average NCE to a %ile rank score

Grading Scale: Same as Item 2.1

ACHIEVEMENT/ABILITY COMPARISON SCALE

A	Above 5.8	C	4.6 to 4.8
A-	5.7 to 5.8	C-	4.4 to 4.5
B+	5.5 to 5.6	D+	4.2 to 4.3
B	5.3 to 5.4	D	4.0 to 4.1
B-	5.1 to 5.2	D-	3.8 to 3.9
C+	4.9 to 5.0	F	3.7 and below

WRITING ASSESSMENT SCALE

A	5.76 and above	C	4.26 to 4.50
A-	5.51 to 5.75	C-	4.01 to 4.25
B+	5.26 to 5.50	D+	3.76 to 4.00
B	5.01 to 5.25	D	3.51 to 3.75
B-	4.76 to 5.00	D-	3.26 to 3.50
C+	4.51 to 4.75	F	3.25 and below

AMERICAN COLLEGE TESTING

(ACT Score Scale)

A	24 and above	C	20 to 20.9
A-	3.4 to 23.9	C-	19.3 to 19.9
B+	22.9 to 23.3	D+	18.6 to 19.2
B	22.3 to 22.8	D	17.9 to 18.5
B-	21.7 to 22.2	D-	17 to 17.8
C+	21 to 21.6	F	Below 17

State Department of Education

Report Card Glossary – FY 1999-2000

Item 2.6: ***Projected 4-Year Dropout Rate***
[Not on Elementary or Middle School Card]

Description: This section contains the projected 4-year dropout rate as a measure of the cumulative proportion of the ninth grade class that would dropout prior to graduation if that year's grade specific dropout rate were to remain constant over the four years.

Source: Calculation using data collected from LEA dropout reports. Values are rounded to nearest hundredth.

Years: 1998-1999 Only

Calculations: **Step 1: Calculate the number of dropouts by grade (Grades 9,10,11, and 12)**

Step 2: Compute the average by dividing each sum by the enrollment for that grade.

Example: Grade 9 - 10 dropouts / 250 enrolled = .04;
Grade 10 - 20 dropouts in 160 enrolled = 20/160 = .125
Grade 11 - 5 dropouts in 300 enrolled = 5/300 = .0167
Grade 12 - 20 dropouts in 200 enrolled = 20/200 = .1

Step 3: Compute the probability that a student remains all 4 years:

Get (1- the decimal value from 2) for each grade:

(1-0.04) = .96 (1 – 0.125) = .875 (1-0.017) = ..983 (1-0.1) = .9

Multiply these probabilities together:

(.96)*(.875)*(.983)*(.9) = .743

Subtract from 1.000: 1.000-.743 = .257

The projected rate is 25.7% over 4 years

STATE PROJECTED 4-YEAR DROPOUT RATE 1998-1999 GRADE

A	Below 4.7%	C	15.26% to 17.35%
A-	4.70% to 6.75%	C-	17.36% to 19.44%
B+	6.76% to 8.85%	D+	19.46% to 21.55%
B	8.86% to 10.95%	D	21.56% to 23.65%
B-	10.96% to 13.15%	D-	23.66% to 25.70%
C+	13.16% to 15.25%	F	Above 25.70%

NATIONAL PROJECTED 4-YEAR DROPOUT RATE GRADE

A	7.9% and below	C	18.5% to 21.5%
A-	8.0% to 9.9%	C-	21.6% to 23.6%
B+	10.0% to 11.9%	D+	23.7% to 25.7%
B	12.0% to 13.9%	D	25.8% to 27.8%
B-	14.0% to 16.3%	D-	27.9% to 29.9%
C+	16.4% to 18.4%	F	30.00% and above

STANFORD ACHIEVEMENT TEST
(SAT 9 Improvement Scale)

ALERT SCHOOLS		CAUTION SCHOOLS	
A	9% decrease	A	4% decrease
B	7.0% to 8.9%	B	3.0% to 3.9%
C	5.0% to 6.9%	C	2.0% to 2.9%
D	3.0% to 4.9%	D	1.0% to 1.9%
F	Less than 3%	F	Less than 1.0%

State Department of Education

Report Card Glossary – FY 1999-2000

Item 2.10: ***High School Graduation Exam – 11 Grade Scores Only***

HIGH SCHOOL BASIC SKILLS EXIT EXAM

(% Passing Reading and Language)

A	91% and Above	C	74 to 78
A-	89 to 90	C-	70 to 73
B+	87 to 88	D+	67 to 69
B	85 to 86	D	64 to 66
B-	83 to 84	D-	61 to 63
C+	79 to 82	F	Below 61

Item 2.11: ***Enrollment***

Description: This section contains total second month enrollment as reported by the respective schools in the Attendance data collection taken on the 40th day of school for each school year.

Source: LEA reported enrollment – second month [40th day of school].

Calculations: None

Item 2.12: ***% Average Daily Attendance (ADA)***

Description: This section contains the % average daily attendance based on the first 40 days of school.

Source: Calculation using attendance reported in the attendance data collection.

Calculations: The ADA is calculated by dividing the aggregate attendance days reported by the number of days that the school was in session during the reporting period. The ADA is converted to a %age by dividing the ADA by the average daily membership for that period.

Item 3.2 Faculty and Staff Information

Description: *This section contains a breakdown of staff by classification for the 1999-2000 school year. The school report cards will provide both the staffing within that school and the total staffing for all schools in the system.*

Source: *Calculation using data collected from the 1999-2000 LEA Personnel Data Collection taken in November 1999.*

Calculations: *Total Full-time equivalency [FTE] for each classification.*

ITEM 3.4 Career and Technical Programs

CAREER/TECHNICAL PROGRAM CERTIFICATION

(% Certified)

A	*40% and Above*	*C*	*28% to 29.99%*
A-	*37.5% to 39.99%*	*C-*	*26% to 27.99%*
B+	*36% to 37.49%*	*D+*	*24% to 25.99%*
B	*34% to 35.99%*	*D*	*22% to 23.99%*
B-	*32% to 33.99%*	*D-*	*20% to 21.99%*
C+	*30% to 31.99%*	*F*	*Less then 20%*

Section 4.3: System Spending Per Student

Scales for FY 1995-1996

STATE 1995-96 SPENDING PER STUDENT			
A	*$5,685 and Above*	*C*	*$4,279 to $4,679*
A-	*$5,484 to $5,684*	*C-*	*$4,079 to $4,278*
B+	*$5,283 to $5,483*	*D+*	*$3,878 to $4,078*
B	*$5,082 to $5,282*	*D*	*$3,677 to $3,877*
B-	*$4,881 to $5,081*	*D-*	*$3,476 to $3,676*
C+	*$4,680 to $4,880*	*F*	*$3,475 and Below*

Scales for FY 1998-1999

NATIONAL 1998-99 SPENDING PER STUDENT			
A	*Above $9,438*	*C*	*$6,434 to $6,934*
A-	*$8,938 to $9438*	*C-*	*$6,000 to $6,433*
B+	*$8,438 to $8,937*	*D+*	*$5,500 to $5,999*
B	*$7,937 to $8,437*	*D*	*$5,000 to $5,499*
B-	*$7,436 to $7,936*	*D-*	*$4,500 to $4,999*
C+	*$6,935 to $7,435*	*F*	*Below $4,500*
SOUTHEASTERN 1998-99 SPENDING PER STUDENT			
A	*Above $7,268*	*C*	*$5,864 to $6,264*
A-	*$7,068 to $7,268*	*C-*	*$5,664 to $5,863*
B+	*$6,867 to $7,067*	*D+*	*$5,464 to $5,663*
B	*$6,666 to $6,866*	*D*	*$5,264 to $5,463*
B-	*$6,465 to $6,665*	*D-*	*$5,064 to $5,263*
C+	*$6,265 to $6,464*	*F*	*Below $5,064*
STATE 1998-99 SENDING PER STUDENT			
A	*Above $6,503*	*C*	*$5,150 to $5,500*
A-	*$6,303 to $6,503*	*C-*	*$4,951 to $5149*
B+	*$6,102 to $6,302*	*D+*	*$4,750 to $4,950*
B	*$5,901 to $6,101*	*D*	*$4,550 to $4,749*
B-	*$5,701 to $5,900*	*D-*	*$4,349 to $4,549*
C+	*$5,501 to $5,700*	*F*	*Below $4,349*

Section 4.4: Mills Equivalent

Description: *This section contains the calculated mills equivalent which is computed by taking the total local revenue for public school purposes, excluding insurance and tuition, and dividing it by the value of one regular district mill of Ad Valorem tax.*

Source: *Calculation using data collected from the LEA Financial Report as of August 31st of the year in which the report was filed.*

Calculations: *([Local Revenue] - [Tuition] - [Insurance]) / [value of one regular district mill of ad valorem tax]*